

Tracing Missing Persons in the U.S.

It is difficult to trace someone in the United States when their whereabouts are completely unknown, as there are no central records of names and addresses available to the public. For those trying to locate former colleagues, friends or relations the following information may be of assistance. When writing to an agency or organization listed below, you should provide as much information as possible about the person you seek. At least the full name, date and place of birth should be given. For military personnel, the rank, serial number and branch of service should be specified. We hope that success results from your efforts. Unfortunately, the U.S. Embassy cannot assist any further with individual searches.

Important Notice: It is not possible to trace the whereabouts of persons through Department of Homeland Security channels. Records of the Department of Homeland Security are protected by the Privacy Act and cannot be divulged to third parties.

ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL

Written requests for assistance in locating information on military personnel currently serving may be sent to the appropriate office listed below:

Air Force Worldwide Locator AFPC/MSIMDL 550 C Street W Suite 50 Randolph Air Force Base TX 78150-4752	Army Worldwide Locator US Army ELREC 8899 E. 56th Street Indianapolis, IN 46249-5301
Navy Worldwide Locator Bureau of Naval Personnel For family members: BUPRS Pers 324D 2 Navy Annex Washington, DC 20370-3240 For non-family: BUPRS 02116 2 Navy Annex Washington, DC 20370-0216	Marine Corps Worldwide Locator Commandant of the Marine Corps HQ, USMC, Code MMSB Washington, DC 20380-1775 Coast Guard Locator G-MPC-S-3 U.S. Coast Guard 2100 2nd Street SW Washington, DC 20593

The above locator offices may be able to provide a current address, and in some instances will attempt to forward correspondence to the individual's military base/unit. Correspondence for the missing service member can be enclosed - together with a brief letter of explanation - to the appropriate service locator. The letter to be forwarded should contain nothing of value and be in a plain, unsealed, unstamped envelope bearing only the individual's grade, full name, and, if possible, military serial number. Please ensure that your name and return address - including country - is clearly indicated on the top left hand corner of the envelopes, as required by the U.S. Postal Service. Please note that a nominal fee may be charged for this service.

FORMER MILITARY PERSONNEL

The Embassy maintains no records on active or former members of the United States Armed Forces. All Official Military Personnel Files of discharged and deceased veterans are kept in the United States at the National Personnel Records Center (N.P.R.C.). Requests for information on former service members must be directed, in writing, to that agency. You should mark your letter for the attention of Mr. Charles Pellegrini and mark it "Do not open in the Mail Room". A form requesting a record search will be mailed to you. When completing the form, you should provide the full name, including middle initials, details of military service, and the former service member's serial (or social security) number, if known.

Please note that certain restrictions imposed on the N.P.R.C. by the 1974 Privacy Act may make your search more difficult. These restrictions limit disclosure of data from U.S. government files to the individual themselves or to those who can provide clear evidence of direct kinship to the individual being sought. In the case of children trying to trace their fathers, the N.P.R.C. is required to provide only the last known town and state - i.e., not a full street address - if they believe the father to be still alive. Addresses on record are often those furnished by the service member at the time of discharge and may well be some years out-of-date. In all instances only written requests - signed and dated - on the appropriate forms will be accepted. The address of the N.P.R.C. is:

National Personnel Records Center
Attn: Mr. Charles Pellegrini, Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
U.S.A.

U.S. citizens wishing to re-establish contact with, or information about, former service friends mainly use military publications and the magazines of veterans' organizations. A brief notice placed therein reaches a wide audience and may well come to the attention of the individual themselves or a former member of the same unit. As well as individual veterans' associations' publications, letters are published in the following large-circulation newspapers and magazines:

Army/Navy/Air Force Times 'Locator Service' 6883 Commercial Drive Springfield, VA 22159-0160	Air Force Magazine 'Bulletin Board' 1501 Lee Highway Arlington, VA 22209-1198
American Legion Magazine 700 N Pennsylvania Street P.O. Box 1055 Indianapolis, IN 46206	The Retired Officer Magazine 201 N Washington Ave Alexandria, VA 22314-2539

Letters written to the above publications should be brief and preferably typed. Do not send documents or photographs, and please ensure that your name and return address - including country - is clearly indicated.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Note: Please note that inclusion of an organization or product in the following text does not denote that they carry an Embassy endorsement.

Local Sources: If the original address of the individual you are seeking is known, you can pursue local sources of information. Among the many possible avenues are: county Office of Vital Records for either birth or marriage records of the individual; high school reunion organizers and college alumni associations; Adjutant General's Office in the person's home state for data on state personnel who served in World War II, Korea, or Vietnam; county and state Veteran's Administration Offices for information in case the individual applied for Veteran's benefits or hospitalization; local posts of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Veterans of World War II for information on local veterans who survived Korea and Vietnam; county Probate Office for a will or Letters of Administration for the person if he or she possessed property in the county and is now deceased; local newspapers, for articles, obituaries, death notices, etc; the state Office of Vital Statistics for death records of service personnel who died while on active duty. Please note that the Embassy does not keep addresses for the above offices.

Agencies: Private organizations can provide guidance to assist people trace relatives and friends. However, please be aware that the inclusion of an organization in the text below does not denote that it holds the Embassy endorsement. All details are provided for information only:

<p>TRACE (Transatlantic Children's Enterprise)</p> <p>Norma Jean Clarke-McCloud Heron's Flight 1H Bycullah Road Enfield, EN2 8EE (Send SAE) Email: trace.info@virgin.net</p>	<p>Kith & Kin Tracing</p> <p>Richard J. Constable "Green Gables" Willow Grove Fair Oak, Eastleigh Hants SO5 7BJ</p>
<p>Ariel Bruce Associates</p> <p>Independent Social Workers 6 Regent Square London WC1H 8HZ</p>	<p>War Babes</p> <p>Mrs. Shirley McGlade 15 Plough Avenue South Woodgate Birmingham B32 3TQ Tel: 0121-608-5108 (Send SAE)</p>

Private detectives and tracing agencies in the U.S.A., such as The International Locator Service, can also assist but they are usually expensive. Names and addresses are listed in American Yellow Pages, often available at local reference libraries (see below).

Telephone Directories: The quickest and cheapest way of establishing contact with an individual is often by telephone. Many main reference libraries have collections of American telephone directories available for consultation. In London, the City Business Library at 1 Brewers Hall Garden, London EC1 (tel: 020-7638-8215 or 020-7480-7638 recorded information) has a large collection of directories. Alternatively, the Holborn Reference Library at 32-38 Theobolds Road, London WC1 has telephone directories on microfiche for visitors' reference - however, this office has been informed that the records date back only as far as 1990. A number of U.S. national telephone directories are now available on CD-ROM - PhoneDisc USA and PhoneDisc Reverse are two such products. These contain millions of telephone numbers retrievable by name and are often available through large public libraries both in the United States and the United Kingdom. These services are usually up-dated monthly, but can vary widely in quality. In the first instance, you should contact your local reference library to see whether they can assist with directory information. The International Telecom Operator (153) can also assist, if the last known address of the missing person is available.

Books & Newspapers: There are a number of publications available through libraries that deal with the tracing of family history. For example, the Archive and Local History Department at the Marylebone Library at 10 St. Anne's Street, London SW1P (tel: 020-7798-1030) carries the publication, "Short Cuts to Family History" by Michael Gandy. This comprehensive and informative guide details how one should go about planning research and lists useful publications and organizations.

It may also be worthwhile writing to newspapers, magazines or specialist publications which circulate in the area where the missing person was last known to live. Addresses of local newspapers and magazines in the United States can be found in Benn's Media Directory and Willings Press Guide, available at many local libraries.

How to Locate Anyone Who is or Has Been in the Military: Armed Forces Locator Directory, Fifth Division, by Lt. Col (Ret) Richard Johnson, MIE Publishing, P.O. Box 17188, Spartanburg, SC 29301, price \$23.00. This book details hundreds of proven ways to locate current and former members of all service branches, including National Guard and Reserve. It tells how to obtain copies of individual service records, rosters, muster rolls, after-action reports, and numerous other military records. Please note that Colonel Johnson also runs a commercial detective agency specializing in the tracing of former members of the military.

Several general books covering U.S. forces in the U.K. during World War II have proved useful to researchers, as they occasionally detail the geographical location of specific units. Further suggestions are given on the Military History Books Information Sheet which is available from The Defense Attaché's Office, Box 54, The American Embassy, London W1.

Religious Organizations

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints: In both the United Kingdom and the United States there are Family History Centres, which are usually located within Latter-Day Saint churches. There are over 2,400 of these Family History Centres worldwide. Here you can find, or obtain, census returns, wills, church records, etc. from most parts of the world. In addition, you can consult the International Genealogical Index (I.G.I) and the Ancestral File.

The I.G.I. is a worldwide index of approximately 187 million names of deceased persons. This index does not contain records of living persons. The Ancestral File contains genealogical data on millions of individuals from many countries, including information on names, dates and places of birth, marriage and death. Please note that most of the information on the File concerns deceased persons. The File also contains names and addresses of persons who have submitted information, and this information is updated periodically.

Two **Family History Centres** located in the U.K. can be contacted at the following addresses:

<p>Hyde Park Chapel 64-68 Exhibition Road Kensington London SW7</p> <p>Tel: 020-7589-8561</p>	<p>5 Elizabeth Terrace St. Michael's Mount Marazion Cornwall</p> <p>Tel: 01326-564503</p>
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A full list of all Family History Centres and their telephone numbers worldwide can be obtained from:

The Family History Library
35 North West Temple Street
Salt Lake City
Utah 84150
Tel: 801-240-2331

Humanitarian Organizations

The following organizations may be able to assist in cases of sufficiently compelling humanitarian need and where the missing person is a close relative:

<p>British Red Cross</p> <p>Tracing & Messages Section International Welfare Department 9 Grosvenor Crescent London SW1X 1EJ Tel: 020-7235-5454</p>	<p>Salvation Army</p> <p>Family Tracing Service 101 Newington Causeway London SE1 6BN Tel: 020-7367-4747 family.tracing@salvationarmy.org.uk</p>
<p>Adoptees Liberty Movement</p> <p>Box 154, Washington Bridge Station New York, NY 10033 U.S.A. Tel: 001-212-581-1568</p>	<p>International Social Services</p> <p>New York, NY 10016 Tel: 001-212-532-6350</p>

Social Security Administration

The Social Security Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs will attempt to forward correspondence to missing persons, but only when a considerable monetary or strong humanitarian consideration is involved. You should send a letter intended for the missing person, along with a brief letter of explanation to the appropriate agency. The letter to be forwarded should contain nothing of value and be in a plain, unsealed, unstamped envelope bearing only the person's name and social security/military serial number. If this number is not known, you should include any other identifying information, such as full name, date and place of birth and parents' names. The addresses are:

Social Security Administration

300 North Green Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Department of Veterans Affairs

810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

In the case of the Social Security Administration, a \$3.00 fee applies in cases involving a monetary purpose. An International Money Order in dollars should be enclosed and made payable to the Social Security Administration. The SSA will be unable to report whether or not the letter is actually delivered.